

TRIBUTE TO JAIME FABEY, ELIZABETH TOPHAM, SALIL GABALE AND BRIAN BECK ON THEIR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE IN ASSISTING THE HURRICANE VICTIMS ALONG THE GULF COAST

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2006

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous honor and privilege for me to rise to honor four young members of the AmeriCorps Program for their heroic assistance to the individuals devastated by hurricanes along the Gulf Coast. The National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) program, under AmeriCorps, is a full-time, teamwork-encouraging, non-profit organization comprised of individuals ages 18–24 who strive to serve the community at large, wherever assistance is needed. These four individuals, who so patriotically aided the residents of the Gulf Coast area, reside in the 7th Congressional District of Pennsylvania.

AmeriCorps was founded in 1994, through the enactment of the National Community Service Trust Act. Members of the NCCC are required to serve for a minimum of ten months at a time, and are Red Cross-trained and certified in CPR, first-aid, and mass care. More than 1,600 NCCC members have extended their relief efforts to residents of the Gulf Coast region since September 2005, and have amassed approximately 600,000 hours of service—a truly commendable effort.

Jaime Fabey, an NCCC Team Leader, led a group of ten Corps members on two disaster relief mission-projects along the Gulf Coast. In partnership with the First Baptist Church of New Orleans, Jaime and her team, for two months helped save 16 homes as well as the personal items of many families whose homes were unsalvageable. Elizabeth Topham and her teammates spent their first assignment helping with the construction of the Salvation Army's largest outreach center in New Orleans, which aided more than 12,000 local residents. Salil Gabale and teammates worked to repair a warehouse that belonged to a non-profit organization named the Green Project, located in Covington, LA. Brian Beck offered his support through carrying out damage assessments and recruiting for volunteers. Brian and his team are currently building houses for hurricane disaster victims in Slidell, Louisiana.

As the Vice-Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, I have seen first-hand the positive effects of the NCCC. These four young members have no doubt played a large role in upholding the excellent reputation of this organization.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have within my district four remarkably heroic and brave members of the NCCC. Our Nation owes Jaime Fabey, Elizabeth Topham, Salil Gabale and Brian Beck and the rest of the NCCC volunteers our most sincere gratitude for their services. We are most certainly a safer country because of their outstanding efforts. Again, I have the great privilege of representing these special individuals and honoring them for their selfless service to those who needed it the most during a time of national crisis.

HONORING BROOKSIDE ENGINE COMPANY NO. 1

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2006

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Brookside Engine Company No. 1 in the Mendham Township Fire Department and the Mendham Township Police Department, in the Township of Mendham, New Jersey, a patriotic community that I am proud to represent. On July 4, 2006, the good citizens of Mendham Township will celebrate two historic occasions with a special festivities and a parade: the 90th anniversary of Brookside Engine Company No. 1, and the 50th anniversary of the Mendham Township Police Department.

Brookside Engine Company No. 1 was founded on January 16, 1916, with 20 devoted charter members. During the ensuing 90 years, Brookside Engine Company No. 1, composed entirely of volunteers, has been dutifully serving the community and surrounding towns.

Today, Brookside Engine Company No. 1 is led by Fire Chief Sam Tolley, who presides over a membership of 45 regular volunteers and a junior division of more than 12 members between 16 and 18 years of age.

The Mendham Township Police Department was officially established on March 12, 1956. During its 50 years of existence, the department has employed a total of seven chiefs, a testament to its sterling reputation.

In 1994, Thomas J. Costanza was promoted to chief, a position he holds today. To support him, the department has 15 full-time officers. These courageous police officers continue to serve their community with integrity and honor, providing safety and protection to the residents of Mendham Township.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the volunteers of Brookside Engine Company No. 1 on 90 years of rich history, and the officers of the Mendham Township Police Department for 50 years of commendable service.

RECOGNIZING AN ARTICLE BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN, SPIRITUAL LEADER OF CONGREGATION BETH CHAVERIM IN VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2006

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce an article written by Rabbi Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, VA. The article by Rabbi Zoberman reads as follows:

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's successful first official visit recently to the United States was an expected formality between the leaders of two close and long-standing allies. It was also an essential opportunity for the Israeli Prime Minister to extend the intimate bond between his predecessor Ariel Sharon and President Bush, which Sharon learned to carefully cultivate, to his own budding relationship with a mighty and necessary friend.

Olmert, a skilled politician who has been moving away from a somewhat abrasive demeanor, did find the right words of gratitude, deference and shared sentiment. In his granted appearance as a special guest before a joint session of Congress, he received no less than 17 standing ovations reflecting America's genuine sympathy for the Jewish state which transcends those who happen to be in power on either side at a given time.

In fact, the vital alliance born of common values and interest between the senior and junior partners, has assumed a heightened relevancy following 9/11 with the complex war on terrorism and the costly thrust to bring democracy's freedoms to the Middle East and beyond. Who more than the ever beleaguered State of Israel has experienced what terrorizing onslaught on innocent civilians and a cherished way of life is all about?

The President gave his approving nod to the Prime Minister's unilateral plan of the "realignment" (the latest term) of Israel's future borders in the absence of a peace partner. The Palestinian Hamas-led government even rejects Israel's right to exist and is locked in a deadly struggle of a civil war nature with Fatah over running the Palestinian Authority. When will the Palestinians stop the tragic cycle of never missing an opportunity to miss an opportunity? Olmert voiced support for the seemingly moribund Road Map which Bush welcomed, as the President reiterated his embrace of Israel's determination to hold onto its large settlement blocks on the West Bank while relinquishing control over sparsely populated territory to allow for the creation of a Palestinian state.

The Prime Minister, a former Mayor of challenge-laden Jerusalem, is yet to be tested in Israel's hot political crucible in his country's top position. It is doubtless that he was given an extraordinary historic opportunity to affect Israel's destiny and fully implement the vision of Sharon who was so suddenly incapacitated at the height of his popularity and on the threshold of fateful decisions having accomplished the controversial Gaza disengagement. But likely the highlight of Olmert's visit to the capital of the world's only remaining superpower was the stern warning he poignantly delivered concerning the impending threat from Iran, and his revelation that the terror sponsoring radical Muslim regime ghoulishly calling for Israel's elimination while denying the Holocaust is almost within reach, closer than anticipated of developing a nuclear capability.

One wonders if the Prime Minister personally presented the priceless gift of supporting intelligence reports, thus nailing the unavoidable response that the United States and the West are saddled with at this very hour. The risks of hesitant inaction though far outweighs those of resolute action, sending a powerful message that tyrannical blackmail is unacceptable and that the resolve of free nations to prevail is unshakeable. An ambiguous response invites further aggression with rising costs. Iran's mullahs' genocidal design on Israel, with Europe as a potential target as well while seeking hegemony in a critical region, ought to alarm us enough. What should however be clear is that Israel's only option is to survive, it simply can not afford to absorb a first nuclear strike. Have we not internalized by now History's painful lessons, are we doomed to forever repeat the past? I pray not.

Rabbi Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, was born to Polish Holocaust survivors in Chu, Kazakhstan, in 1945 and raised in Haifa, Israel.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
DALE E. KLEIN

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 26, 2006

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, the Honorable Dale E. Klein, currently the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defense Programs, departs his post this week to assume the position of Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Born and educated in Missouri, Vice Chancellor for Special Engineering Programs in the University of Texas System, and on leave from his position as Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering (Nuclear Programs) at the University of Texas in Austin, Dr. Klein, as the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense from November 2001 to June 2006, led the Department of Defense's efforts to combat weapons of mass destruction at a watershed time in history.

In this position, he served as the principal staff assistant and advisor to the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology for all matters concerning the formulation of policy and plans for nuclear weapons, and nuclear, chemical, and biological defense. He was directly responsible to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense for matters associated with nuclear weapons safety and security, chemical weapons demilitarization, chemical and biological defense programs, cooperative threat reduction, treaties, and agreements.

In this capacity, he was responsible for the day-to-day oversight of four organizations responsible for billions of dollars in providing combat support operations to the Theater Commanders in support of the Global War on Terrorism, Counterproliferation and Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction. In addition, he was responsible for the Research and Development, Testing and Evaluation, and Acquisition Life-cycle Planning for systems to combat Weapons of Mass Destruction and to survive in a contaminated environment.

Dr. Klein personally facilitated international cooperation in the area of nuclear weapons safety and security by ensuring active and relevant bi-lateral dialogue was ongoing between several nuclear nations. These actions directly helped ensure proper stewardship of the enduring nuclear weapons stockpile by several nations, while maintaining adherence to numerous international treaties and agreements, such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. These programmatic actions serve to help mitigate the threat nuclear weapons pose to world order, while ensuring the President retains a credible deterrent option.

He supported and electrified President Bush's aims for the NATO-Russia Council. Desiring to see NATO and Russia move forward, together, to face common challenges and build ties that expand with time, Dr. Klein helped facilitate and institute numerous initiatives in the realm of nuclear and chemical and biological defense programs. These challenges include countering terrorism, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, search and rescue operations at sea, and emergency planning.

Dr. Klein led the establishment of a significant new effort in medical bio-warfare defense. The Transformational Medical Technology Initiative (TMTI) focuses more than \$1 billion over the next five years to develop broad-spectrum medical countermeasures against advanced bio-terror threats, including genetically engineered pathogens.

Dr. Klein provided the Chemical Demilitarization Program with the oversight and policy guidance that led to the successful start of five new chemical weapons destruction facilities. Under Dr. Klein's Leadership, the Chemical Demilitarization Program led the international community in compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention obligations while maintaining the safety and security of the workers, the environment and the public during the destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile and former chemical weapons production facilities.

His endeavors produced extraordinary results and will have a lasting impact on the quality of many of the programs vital to the Department of Defense. They include such significant accomplishments as: successful stewardship of the U.S. nuclear deterrent enterprise; spearheading efforts to develop science and technology programs aimed at establishing the backbone of Domestic Nuclear Defense; personally facilitating international cooperation in the area of nuclear weapons safety and security; and development of capabilities to defeat improvised explosive devices, special weapons, hardened targets, and WMD stockpiles and production facilities.

Dale Klein accelerated national security in the critical areas of nuclear weapons safety and security, chemical weapons demilitarization, chemical and biological defense programs, cooperative threat reduction, and nuclear, chemical, and biological treaties and agreements. His leadership, vision, and tenacity were the driving forces in transforming the Department of Defense's approach to nuclear, chemical and biological defense while proactively seeking new and revolutionary technologies to address future threats. Dr. Klein's achievements and dedication represent the highest traditions of public service.

HIGHER EDUCATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT EXTENSION

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today the House will temporarily extend for 3 months the Higher Education Act. I rise today to support this extension and to express my concern for the dangerous direction in which this Congress has taken our country's college students and our Nation's valued higher education system.

The Republican leadership has failed college students and their families by pushing through a reauthorization bill that does nothing to make college more affordable as tuition continues to increase at a rate faster than inflation. Instead of helping students and families deal with the rising price to attend college, Republicans also passed legislation cutting

\$12 billion from the student loan program—the largest cut in the history of federal student financial aid.

In addition to cutting Federal aid, the Republican leadership has made loans more expensive. And the bad news keeps coming. Recent reports confirm what struggling families already know—students and families are going deeper and deeper into debt to finance a college education. The Project on Student Loan Debt, a non-profit advocacy group, has found that the percentage of graduate seniors who have debt loads of \$40,000 or more have increased from 1.3 percent to 8 percent between 1993 and 2004.

Another recent report done by the Public Interest Research Group's Higher Education Project shows that 25 percent of public school graduates and 38 percent of private school graduates who become new teachers can't afford to pay their student debt on their salaries. Social workers in the same situation number even more—37 percent of public and 55 percent of private school graduates can't afford their student loan payments. More and more students are graduating with student loan debt numbers in the six figures. This is unmanageable and unfair and Congress can be a better partner in making the possibility of going to college more attainable—especially for middle- and low-income students.

Another troubling statistic has emerged—during the 2004–2005 school year—student borrowing of private loans increased by 30 percent. Private student loans are often used to bridge the gap between traditional financial aid and the cost of tuition—but they are more costly to students and families. In addition to being costlier, these private loans do not share some of the features of Federal student loans that are backed by the government, including deferment of payments and the rates at which interest may accrue.

What's more, starting July 1, Federal student loans will carry a higher fixed interest rate of 6.8 percent, an increase from the current 5.3 percent. That's why I support Democratic plans to provide substantive increases to the Pell Grant and to cut the student loan interest rates in half. As a co-sponsor of the Reverse the Raid on Student Aid Act, I believe that Congress can be a better partner for those students and their families who—as we debate these very issues that affect them—are sitting at kitchen tables across the country trying to figure out how to piece together the finances to attend college this fall.

There is some good news in this extension. The good news is that the current law that will be extended today is better than the Republican bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, H.R. 609, which does nothing to make college more affordable for students—the expressed purpose of the Higher Education Act. It makes no sense to make college more expensive by amending a law that exists to promote access to a college education.

College students should not be forced to bear the weight of President Bush's and this Republican Congress's irresponsible fiscal policies that have slashed student aid in order to pay for tax cuts that only benefit one percent of the nation's wealthiest. As I've stated in earlier extensions—today, this temporary extension is necessary, but I will continue to work to ensure that students will not be forced to pay for this enormous deficit now through financial aid cuts—or in the future as taxpayers.